United Nations A/HRC/29/G/5

General Assembly

Distr.: General
22 June 2015
English
Original: Arabic

Human Rights Council
Twenty-ninth session
Agenda item 4
Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Note verbale dated 19 May 2015 from the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

The Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and wishes to submit to the Human Rights Council additional information concerning the latest systematic and continuous terrorist acts perpetrated by terrorist armed groups such as "Da'esh", the "Nusra Front", the "Free Army", the "Army of Islam" and the "Army of Conquest" against peaceful civilian citizens of the Syrian Arab Republic. In particular, thousands of terrorists members of these groups infiltrated into the towns of Idlib and Jisr al-Shughour and the village of Ishtabraq on 26 April 2015.

The terrorist armed groups, including the "Nusra Front", which has been armed and trained by the Turkish Government, perpetrated a massacre a few days ago in the village of Ishtabraq in the countryside of Jisr al-Shughour. The terrorists slaughtered dozens of civilians, mostly women and children, and the bodies of their victims were left scattered around the local farmland. This demonstrates the barbarity of the terrorist "Nusra Front" and the barbarity of the Turkish, Saudi and Qatari leaders who support them.

The massacre and crimes were committed in Idlib Governorate after officials belonging to the Turkish intelligence agencies, operating from a centre established on the Turkish-Syrian border with the support of the Saudi and Qatari regimes, provided logistic and military support to facilitate the infiltration into Syrian territory of about 5,000 foreign terrorists, mostly members of the terrorist "Nusra Front", which is included in the Security Council lists of terrorist entities. Two terrorist units of the "Nusra Front" invaded the town of Jisr al-Shughour after showering it with rocket-propelled grenades for several days. They swept through the safe neighbourhoods, killing entire families and forcibly displacing thousands of civilians from their homes and land. The assaults occurred in the context of support by the Turkish Government for the arming, funding and training of thousands of terrorists with a view to destroying the city of Aleppo, displacing its inhabitants, and occupying the town of Idlib, following their previous occupation of the town of Kassab. The terrorists have

Please recycle

killed hundreds of Syrians, mutilating their bodies and chopping off the heads of many of their victims.

The Permanent Mission is attaching to this note verbale a copy of the documentary report produced by the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic concerning the massacre perpetrated by the armed terrorist groups in the village of Ishtabraq in the countryside of Jisr al-Shughour. It contains lists of the names of persons who were killed and abducted. To date a total of 31 persons have been killed and a total of 139 have been abducted (a majority were women, children and older persons).

The Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic requests the secretariat of the Human Rights Council to publish and disseminate this note verbale and its attachment in the official languages of the United Nations as a document of the twenty-ninth session of the Human Rights Council.

Annex to the note verbale dated 19 May 2015 from the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Documentary report concerning the massacre in the village of Ishtabraq in the countryside of Jisr al-Shughour prepared by the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic

Following our visit to the city of Latakia and our meetings with more than 200 men, women and children who survived the massacre in the village of Ishtabraq, we found, on the basis of the testimony provided (to date) by the survivors, that a total of 38 persons were killed and that a total of 139 (mostly women, children and older persons) were abducted. About 350 survivors, including many suffering from wounds and injuries, reached the city of Latakia; most of them were also women, children and older persons. Preliminary lists of the killed and abducted persons are attached hereto.

A summary of the incident based on the testimony of survivors from the village

As from the morning of 20 April 2015, the village of Ishtabraq was subjected to continuous shelling by missiles, mortars and gas canisters. The most intense shelling occurred on 22 April 2015, when about 300 gas canisters fell on the village, and on 24 April 2015, when the village was subjected from early morning until midnight to continuous shelling and gunfire that ceaselessly targeted houses, streets, people and animals. The villagers were forced to conceal their women and children in a mountain cave that could only barely accommodate 60 people. In the early hours of Saturday morning, the people of the village received communications from friends in Jisr al-Shughour to the effect that thousands of foreign fighters from Turkey and a few small terrorist groups from the region were heading to the village to perpetrate a massacre. A few moments later all cellular and terrestrial communications with the village were cut off. The men then packed the women and children of the village into pickup cars and tractors and began to drive along the Orontes River towards the village of Jawreen. Less than 10 metres from the village, the vehicles of the fleeing villagers were subjected to a salvo of bullets and rockets and a number of them burst into flames. The village mayor Ibrahim Hrou, who was driving one of the cars, was killed immediately, while some of his passengers were burned. Others fled and were abducted by the armed groups who were approaching the village on foot.

According to the testimony of all the survivors, the vehicles conveying the fleeing villagers were thrown into a situation of chaos and turmoil as they were targeted by a shower of bullets. People began to leave the vehicles in which they were travelling and to race towards nearby gardens, where they fell into a trap, since the terrorist groups were waiting for them in the gardens and began to shoot them. Many of them were wounded or killed and the others were encircled by the groups. All the survivors confirmed that they were foreigners. Some spoke literary Arabic and others spoke a language that they were unable to understand and that some considered to be Turkish.

After encircling the fleeing villagers in the gardens, the terrorists began to divide the women into one group and the adolescents and men into another and to lead them at gunpoint to the village of Kafeer near Ishtabraq. Some villagers took advantage of the darkness and long lines of captives to flee. They wandered aimlessly through the

gardens for 24 kilometres until they reached the village of Jawreen, where they were received by the Syrian Arab Army and conveyed to safety in the city of Latakia. As already noted, the survivors who arrived from the village of 750 inhabitants totalled 350 men, women and children. They now live with relatives and under the care of the Governorate of Latakia and the Syrian Government.

Observation: The testimony of all the survivors reaffirms that more than 1,000 victims from the northern district of Jisr al-Shughour (the vast majority were children, women and older people) were mown down between the two villages of Kafcer and Qarqur (to the east of the village of Ghaneh in southern Jisr al-Shughour) by a fusillade of bullets shot by armed gangs when they were fleeing southwards. The survivors state that the victims' corpses were spread all over the roads for two days after the massacre.

Lastly, the witnesses we met stated that on 24 April 1915, exactly 100 years ago, a similar massacre was perpetrated in the village of Ishtabraq by the Ottoman occupiers during the so-called "Safar Barlik". The village was emptied of its inhabitants after the massacre, an event that was repeated on 24 April 2015 by the same enemy.

The following is a summary of a number of survivors' testimonies with pictures of some of them:

- This testimony is from the survivor Ahmed Issa al-Daada (disabled), who is almost 70 years old and whose 16-member family, including 11 children under the age of 10, left the village of Ishtabraq in the final moments. He informed us that he saw corpses of the inhabitants scattered about the area. As they were leaving, the armed terrorist gangs fired bullets and threw grenades at them. About 80 people were travelling in a vehicle resembling a tractor; many of them were killed or wounded. Rockets were also fired at civilian vehicles;

  We learned that a man called Younis Fakhro saw his wife and son coming out on the road but was unable to pick them up because of the heavy gunfire. He left them facing death without being able to take any action;

- Statement by the witness Almaza Jawdat Jarad: My daughter (Maya Atouni – 10 years old) was shot by a bullet that entered her stomach and exited through her back. I carried her first and then her uncle carried her. She continued bleeding for five hours. We were hiding on an agricultural track, but then we were ambushed by armed groups wearing Afghan robes and speaking literary Arabic. They separated the men from the women. I asked them to help my daughter who had lost consciousness and seemed to have died, but they took her away with her uncle and ignored my appeal. They took my son (Ali Atouni – 15 years old) and placed him with the men. While they were dividing up the group, I slipped away with my sister Manal Jawdat Jarad, who had a gunshot wound in her thigh, and we covered a distance of 25 kilometres in the dark;

- Naji Tamir Ahmed Misri, who hid on farmland in the village of Ishtabraq, told us that 13 armed gangs attacked the village, targeting civilians with between 23 and 27 machineguns. The terrorists also had modern digital cameras hanging on their chests, which they used for operation monitoring.

Names of the persons who were killed

No	*Name*	*Age*	*Observations*
1	Hossam Ahmed Masri	45	Official
2	Qasim Yousef Masri	17	Student
3	Wesal Ali Doba	60	
4	Maya Ghazwan Atouni	12	
5	Ibrahim Yousef Hrou	65	Mayor
6	Nasr Suleiman Fakhro	45	Official
7	Iyad Taleb Hrou	26	
8	Maram Ali Khedira	35	Teacher
9	Ghroub Hassan Fakhro	12	Student
10	Mohammed Hassan Fakhro	11	Student
11	Ghryab Qadour Ibrahim	75	
12	Ahmed Bassam Hawat	16	
13	Ayah Nasr Fakhro	8	
14	Banah Nasr Fakhro	5	
15	Layal Nasr Fakhro	3	
16	Mohammed Abdul Karim Shalfoun	45	
17	Aiteb Salman	40	
18	Siham al-Ali	70	
19	Mohammed Rajab Doba	45	
20	Ali Jamil Doba	16	
21	Sanaa Mohammed Doba	45	
22	Jamil Ali Doba	48	
23	Wahib Salih Doba	65	
24	Yusuf Mohamed Shalfoun	16	
25	Maryam Zafir Ibrahim		
26	Mohammed Youssef Hammoud	37	
27	Mohammed Wahib Doba	13	
28	Nafila al-Hayek	75	
29	Fawaz Mohammed al-Atrash	47	
30	Saleh Wahib Doba	25	

No	*Name*	*Age*	*Observations*
31	Haytham Qasim Masri	45	
32	Haydar Haytham Masri	12	Appeared in the photos of abductees on the Internet
33	Taj Haytham Masri	7	
34	Radinah Haytham Masri	Baby	
35	Hassan Ahmed Fakhro	34	
36	Hanan Qasim Masri	30	

Names of abducted persons

No	*Name*	*Age*	*Observations*
1	Batoul Youssef Masri	8	
2	Yasmin Youssef Masri	17	
3	Ismahan Khedira	37	Wife of Nasr Fakhro
4	Asma Nasr Fakhro	9	Appeared in the photos of abductees on the Internet
5	Ahmed Hassan Fakhro	13	
6	Mohammed Hassan Fakhro	10	
7	Shuruq Hassan Fakhro	16	
8	Wife of Ghryab Qadour Ibrahim	65	
9	Nadira Suleiman Fakhro	48	
10	Zafer Subhi Ibrahim	42	
11	Itab Youssef Shalfoun	27	Wife of Zafer Subhi Ibrahim
12	Mohammed Zafir Ibrahim	13	
13	Ali Zafir Ibrahim	11	
14	Haydar Zafir Ibrahim	9	
15	Ghadir Zafir Ibrahim	5	
16	Warda Taleb Hrou	30	Appeared on the Internet
17	Maher Fakhro Hrou	8	
18	Ali Fakhro Hrou	4	
19	Ahmed Abu Shukair	80	
20	Badra Mohammed Ghaliya	75	
21	Assoum Hassan Fakhro	50	
22	Bader Ali Badriya	65	
23	Ismail Ibrahim Hrou	32	Appeared on the Internet
24	Faris Ibrahim Hrou	25	Appeared on the Internet
25	Yahya Qaysar Hrou	20	
26	Fatima Dibour Hammoud	60	
27	Riyad Youssef Shalfoun	15	Appeared on the Internet
28	Ali Abdul Karim Shalfoun	35	Disabled
29	Zaynab Ahmed Hammoud	44	
30	Ahmed Madhat Abu Shukair	16	

No.	*Name*	*Age*	*Observations*
31	Layth Madhat Abu Shukair	12	
32	Yara Madhat Abu Shukair	9	
33	Ayah Madhat Abu Shukair	8	
34	Younis Salim Masri	25	Appeared on the Internet
35	Waarda Ahmed Ibrahim	50	
36	Ali Hossam Masri	16	
37	Mohammed Hossam Masri	14	
38	Amal Suleiman Younis	40	
39	Mohhamed Ghadir Masri	10	
40	Ali Ghadir Masri	8	
41	Ibrahim Ghadir Masri	5	
42	Badriya Ghadir Masri		
43	Rajab Mustafa Hammoud	70	
44	Fahima Abu Shukair	20	
45	Mustafa Rajab Hammoud	2	
46	Nirmin Hayek		Wife of Rajab Mustafa Hammoud
47	Mays Rajab Hammoud	25	Teacher
48	Zaynab Rajab Hammoud	35	
49	Rajab Mustafa Hammoud	2	
50	Ayman Aziz Fakhro	36	
51	Zin Ayman Fakhro	4	
52	Kasser Ismail al-Abd	46	Disabled
53	Ghayda Youssef Hammoud	35	
54	Ahmed Kasser al-Abd	9	
55	Rajab Kasser al-Abd	6	
56	Qatfa Mohammed al-Abd	75	
57	Ibtisam Zaydan	46	Wife of Mohammed Salem Ibrahim
58	Ibrahim Mohammed Ibrahim	14	Student
59	Angham Mohammed Ibrahim	15	Student
60	Mohammed Zaydan Abu Shukair	65	

No.	*Name*	*Age*	*Observations*
61	Hamida Mustafa Doba	60	
62	Ismail Ibrahim Hrou	35	
63	Samar Ibrahim Hrou	15	
64	Faris Ibrahim Hrou	26	
65	Abdul Karim Shalfoun	80	
66	Nadira Shalfoun	55	
67	Kahdouj Shalfoun	57	
68	Watfa Shalfoun	60	
69	Mohammed Doba Bin Issa	32	
70	Mouayad Doba Bin Issa	30	
71	Wife of Mouayad Doba	25	
72	Son of Mouayad Doba	3	
73	Son of Mouayad Doba	2	
74	Mustafa Bader Badriya	23	
75	Yahya Qaysar Hrou	18	
76	Taji Fakhro	80	
77	Fatima Masri		
78	Naima Ismail al-Abd	40	
79	Naim al-Abd Bin Ismail	48	
80	Ismail Naim al-Abd	15	Student
81	Ahmed Mostafa Hammoud	75	
82	Bilal Hammoud Bin Mohammed	16	
83	Ahmed Hammoud Bin Mohammed	15	
84	Osama Jawdat Jarad	30	
85	Khulud Qasim Mari	25	
86	Ahmed Bin Osama Jarad	4	
87	Saydra Bin Osama Jarad	10	
88	Fatima Bin Osama Jarad	2	
89	Samer Jawdat Jarad	35	
90	Wafa Adnan Atouni	17	
91	Baraa Samer Jarad	16	

No.	Name	Age	Observations
92	Bushra Samer Jarad	13	
93	Jawad Samer Jarad	8	
94	Bayan Samer Jarad	9	
95	Zaynab Osama Jarad	9	
96	Jafar Samer Jarad	4	
97	Dayaa Samer Jarad	1	
98	Zaher Jawdat Jarad	35	
99	Linda Mohyi al-Din Doba	33	
100	Qamar Zaher Jawdat	14	
101	Dalaa Zaher Jawdat	13	
102	Yamana Ibn Zaher Jawdat	6	
103	Mirna Zaher Jawdat	2	
104	Rim Nidal Atouni	13	
105	Mana Salem Atouni		
106	Basil Atouni	3	
107	Ali Habib Jarad	35	Official
108	Linda Jarad Bint Jawdat	30	
109	Ghafran Ali Jarad	11	
110	Ayah Ali Jarad	6	
111	Bilsan Ali Jarad	4	
112	Samira Mohammed Youssef	55	
113	Ali Jamil Doba		
114	Wife of Ali Jamil Doba		
115	Son of Ali Jamil Doba		
116	Mohammed Hassan Masri		
117	Nada Tawfiq Doba		
118	Mana Salem Atouni	50	
119	Shahd Nidal Atouni	11	
120	Monzer Khedira	47	
121	Ribah Jawdat Jarad	35	Wife of Monzer Khedira
122	Ali Monzer Khedira	12	

No	*Name*	*Age*	*Observations*
123	Nusaiba Monzer Khedira	Baby	
124	Hubba Monzer Khedira	Baby	
125	Huda Ahmed Fakhro	60	Wife of Hassan Doba
126	Majida Hassan Doba	25	
127	Mawj Hassan Doba	17	
128	Miqdad Hassan Doba	15	
129	Ali Rishad Khadrou	50	
130	Salma Samer Jarad	3	
131	Raghda Hikma Saheli	45	
132	Bothaina Naser	60	
133	Nariman Dawi	40	
134	Ahmad Sadiq Abu Shukair	85	
135	Thalja Fakhro	85	
136	Uqayba Ahmad Fakhro	55	
137	Zaynab Ahmad Fakhro	57	
138	Fudda Abdullah	85	
139	Naim Mohammed Khedira	55	Appeared on the Internet